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CURIOUS

# case of the doctor in Mr K's dacha

By Henry Brandon  
Washington

THERE is little disposition here among experts in Sovietology to accept the theory of Victor Zorza in the Guardian that the so-called Khrushchev memoirs were the work of the Central Intelligence Agency, which "took over" the KGB's efforts to infiltrate the Khrushchev material into the West.

According to my sources, Mr Richard Helms, the head of CIA, at one point went to New York and saw Mr Hedley Donovan, editor-in-chief of Time-Life, in the hope of finding out how Time-Life incorporated obtained the document. Donovan refused to give any information. Helms pleaded but Donovan still refused on the grounds that it could jeopardise those who provided Time-Life with the memoirs.

At the State Department this week some 30 experts on the Soviet Union convened to discuss informally the riddle of the memoirs. They reached a broad consensus that they were authentic. There was also a majority belief that the KGB got in on the act at some point, but not at the start. The idea that the KGB invented the memoirs, or that Mr Alexander Shelepin, who was formerly in charge of the secret police, engineered the whole thing to advance his own political interests and to hurt Mr Brezhnev, the present party leader, was discounted.

## Enter the KGB

The theory that made most sense to the experts on Soviet affairs at the meeting was that somebody with personal access to Khrushchev got the memoirs started for politico-philosophical reasons, but without the knowledge of the KGB. When the latter became aware of this project and of the fact that some of the material had already reached sources outside the USSR, they tried to manipulate it, by proceeding to

licity, on the theory that the best way to kill the story was to spread the word that it was

Another indication that the KGB was not the original source of the document but got to hear of it and tried to stop it, is the experience of Dr Harvey, director of the Department of Medicine at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore.

He was called to Moscow a little more than a year ago to attend to a female member of the Khrushchev family who was suffering from an intestinal disease. He spent the whole day with the family and had a chance to talk to Nikita Khrushchev.

When in the evening he returned to Moscow, KGB agents visited him and his wife in their Moscow hotel room, ordered them to undress and subjected them to a search, whose thoroughness could hardly be equalled by a medical specialist. The KGB's orders were clearly to make certain that the doctor did not carry anything abroad.

## Exit Mr Louis

The rumour that Mr Victor Louis (who before now has been an apparent agent of the KGB in the West) acted as intermediary in the case of the Khrushchev Memoirs is also discounted by the experts here. But definite proof one way or the other seems to be lacking on this point.

Stephen Fay writes from New York:

Mr Ralph Graves, of Time Life Inc., disclosed to me here this week that Life is actually bound by a contractual promise not to reveal the origins of the Khrushchev memoirs. Not only does this bind them never to reveal the sources it also prevents them from saying with whom the contract is.

On the theory that the CIA was involved, Graves says: "Such a notion is silly because the CIA has been asking us very nicely if we can tell them anything about it." He also points to the fact that not a single reviewer in the US has cast doubt on the authenticity of the memoirs.

P-Brandon, Henry  
Khrushchev, Nikita

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P-Graves, Ralph

CIA 1.01 Helms, Richard

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P-Donovan, Hedley

P-Fay, Stephen